

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE BROWN COUNTY**  
**LAND CONSERVATION SUBCOMMITTEE**

Pursuant to Section 18.94 Wis. Stats., a regular meeting of the **Brown County Land Conservation Subcommittee** was held on Monday, May 20, 2013 @ Duck Creek Public Works Department, 2198 Glendale Avenue, Howard, WI

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**Present:** Chair Dantine, Supervisors Kaster, Erickson, Sieber, Landwehr; Norb Van De Hei  
**Also Present:** Jim Jolly

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**I. Call Meeting to Order:**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Norb Dantine at 5:00 p.m.

**II. Approve/Modify Agenda.**

**Motion made by Supervisor Kaster, seconded by Supervisor Erickson to approve. Vote taken.**  
**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**III. Approve/modify minutes of Land Conversation Subcommittee of April 22, 2013.**

**Motion made by N. Vande Hei, seconded by Supervisor Sieber to approve. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**Comments from the Public – None.**

**1. Budget Status Financial Report for March, 2013.**

Jolly informed that they were right on target. Landwehr stated that he had met with Director of Administration and it was recommended to have each Department Head explain anything other than the norm in expenses be addressed with the committee.

**Motion made by Supervisor Erickson, seconded by Kaster to receive and place on file. Vote taken.**  
**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**2. NRCS Contribution Agreement and update WLI implementation.**

Jolly informed that the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) contribution agreement total funds awarded was \$26,853. Now there was a \$75,000 contribution agreement projected in their budget this year, they weren't going to be close to that. The Program Manager position that was vacated, they weren't going to be able to fill. They lost a staff position because of that. This money was for two years. He was unsure why the reduction happened.

What they had was an agreement with NRCS to do above and beyond what they normally would do for and with the department. They will do planning work with the county's working lands people. So far they had contacted and did plans on 40 land owners, developed practice schedules for 240 practices on the land. They were bringing in extra engineering staff into the area to help get those done. Even though Land Con lost staff time, they had gained a lot back by utilizing NRCS. Their own staff had been out also and they had walked 35 different land owners' properties and scheduled about 30 practices with them. They were gaining more coverage with less staff. Things were going really well.

**Motion made by Supervisor Erickson, seconded by Landwehr to approve NRCS Agreement for \$26,853. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

3. **EPA Assistance Agreement Grant extension approval – West Shore Project.**

The West Shore Project, they had an agreement grant through EPA. They started tracking the grant last year and noticed that they would have \$150,000 left in the grant. It was scheduled to end this year so he had made formal request to EPA for a no cost extension for the \$150,000. It would allow Land Con to keep Technician Mike Mushinski who was working on that grant right now for one more year. Also Rob Vesperman who was working on the Baird Creek grant which ended this year, Jolly will be able to move him into that project also so they will have two staff on that project. It saves some staff for next year and with two staff Jolly can do the working lands implementation. He can use that staff to do that. They were really expanding their program coverage through this effort. That was great news for them.

This grant was for \$395,815. Those funds paid for Larry Kriese and Mike Mushinski's salaries. The cost sharing came from NRDA. Kriese retired over a year ago and Jolly never filled the position hoping he could extend Mushinski for a year. He had so much money he could extend two positions for a year. Landwehr questioned what they were doing for that project. Jolly stated they were working with private land owners to design and install wet runs on their properties for migrating northern pike, spawning and rearing habitat. It was all in the towns of Pittsfield and Suamico and part of Duck Creek. They had work to keep them busy for years.

**Motion made by Supervisor Erickson, seconded by Supervisor Sieber to approve. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

4. **Ordinance to Amend Sections 26.06 of the Brown County Code Entitled, "Animal Waste Management". *Motion at April Meeting: To forward to Corporation Counsel to draft amended resolution changes that were requested by the City of Green Bay and bring back.***

**Motion made by Supervisor Sieber, seconded by Landwehr to approve. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

5. **Director's Report.**

West Shore Pike Habitat Project: Jolly informed that they had some really good success so far this year. In one trap alone they had over 14,000 fish in two days. Last year they had 300 total on all 26 traps. All the traps were part of the project in which they installed. These were projects that they put on the land where there were never fish before. They monitored natural habitats and noticed that they hadn't produced like the ones they installed. So they were doing some good.

Supervisor Sieber felt it was a neat project. All the work they had been doing was working well with private land owners. He felt it was a great project. With all the habitat and big northern there, hopefully more people could get out and take a look next year.

Jolly informed that the Shedd Aquarium in Chicago got wind of this project, they would like to work with the county and do some research. Ducks Unlimited was also so enthralled with this project that they were taking the county's data, designs, and some of the stats they developed and going nationwide to conferences and talking about it. People across the nation will get wind of this and hopefully that will lead to more dollars coming in so they can expand this program even further.

Jolly informed that the Joint Finance Committee down in Madison was making a decision on whether they would restore \$1.3M for staffing dollars for Land Conservation Departments statewide. That meant probably \$20,000-\$25,000 a year for Brown County. State Representatives John Klenke and John Nygren's offices were the ones Supervisors needed to call. The decision would be made May 21<sup>st</sup> at 10am.

Jolly informed that the Nature Conservancy came to him and stated that they wanted to hire someone for the Land Con Department to do the rest of the digitizing of the phosphorus layer. These were maps that were created by the Land Con office to show how high the phosphorus levels were on every agricultural field in the county. They never got to do the Suamico, Pittsfield, and Hobart areas. The Nature Conservancy stated that they would hire someone to work on this because they were interested in the data also. In allowing this, the Land Con Department won't have to hire an intern for the summer saving them \$4,000. However, Jolly informed that he had plans to come back to the committee for that \$4,000, as a budget adjustment, because they needed computer upgrades for the two engineering staff. Their computers keep crashing during AutoCAD designs. Jolly had talked to the Director of IS about this already. Jolly was trying to save money to make them more efficient.

With regard to the idea of adaptive management and working with the point source dischargers in the community for doing some kind of demonstration farm or pilot project to prove that they can get the phosphorus reductions off the agricultural land, Jolly informed that he was in conversation with Dane County and they were doing a 15,000 acre pilot project down there. He didn't believe that was the answer for the county but he did believe in doing small farm demonstrations, very controlled, not widespread and where they were not asking a lot of farmers to make a lot of changes. They would be actually doing a lot of things on one or two farms. The Great Lakes Commission, the US Geological Survey, the NRCS, the county and possibly NEW Water were interested in getting together and doing something like that and proving that they could get the phosphorus reductions and the recipe for going forward. If they could be successful, it will save rate payers multi-millions of dollars because the point source discharges wouldn't have to do infrastructure upgrades. Jolly informed that he would be bringing a proposal to the committee in the future. Jolly informed that he had drafted a proposal and sent it to NRCS and they were interested in coming forth and paying for this with federal dollars. They would also pay 75% towards a staff person on top of it. It looked positive. The funds would come out of Washington, not just local taxpayer dollars.

Erickson felt that this was a top priority, to attack this project and make sure it was successful because the ramifications were enormous. They had to divert that projective \$240M project. It was a small percentage (3-4%) of phosphorus that was actually going into the Bay of Green Bay that passed through the met. He felt they had to stop it one way or another. It had no end in sight if it went into play for the end users, it would go forever.

Jolly responded that there were a number of the point source dischargers that wanted the county to go and regulate farmers and he was telling everyone that the current regulations weren't going to get the job done so why would they do it. The approach that he would like to take was find farmers that were willing to look at some innovative practices on their farm, pay them to do these practices over a 4-5 year period and see if this worked. If it worked then they would have the recipe to move forward. If it didn't then they would know right then and there at they would have to look at an alternative. He believed that if they did a big project like Dane county, they were setting themselves up for failure. If they expected to regulate this and make it happen, those same farmers that they were asking to go above and beyond, it was very unlikely that they would want to work with the county at that point. How they did it on the front end was critical, they had to do it voluntarily, with some real good incentives and as these farmers implement these practices figure out how it affected their bottom line and make the necessary adjustments financially to cover that.

Jolly informed that they were looking at anything that was mandated by the State right now under NR151 but it would have to go above and beyond, it was going to be a lot. They had to do it systematically and over a period of time. They would like to have two types are farms, a cash crop farm and a dairy farm. Erickson stated that farms were getting bigger and bigger, this was becoming a business and businesses had standards to follow. When you become a business you are not operating the same way as the smaller herders, and you had to look at the best business practices that were out there. They had to make sure everyone was on board. Jolly added that these farmers were making business decisions as well as family decisions. They were going to have to come up with a number of options because everyone will operate differently and choose different things. Whatever they do they would have to come up with a lot of options to do the same job.

With regard to the offers of outside funding to pay for staff, etc. Landwehr stated he would be careful and a little skeptical. It seemed too good to be true that someone was walking in and willing to fund something without some strings attached. Jolly responded that Nature Conservancy received a grant, they didn't spend it all, and so they were looking to burn up their money before the end of the grant cycle. Landwehr replied that that scared him even more but it scared him that they could potentially be doing something that could hurt the counties relationship with these individual farmers. He just asked for some skepticism.

**Motion made by Supervisor Sieber, seconded by Landwehr to receive and place on file. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

6. **Such other matters as authorized by law. None.**

7. **Adjourn.**

**Motion made by Supervisor Erickson , seconded by N. Vande Hei to adjourn at 5:26 p.m. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

Respectfully submitted,

Alicia A. Loehlein  
Recording Secretary